

Emanuel Tov, Kipp Davis, Robert Duke, eds.

Dead Sea Scrolls Fragments in the Museum Collection.

(Publications of the Museum of the Bible 1). Leiden: Brill, 2016. Pp. xxi + 236. Hardback. € 99 / \$ 119. ISBN 9789004321489.

In between November 2009 and May 2010 twelve small fragments from the Judaean Desert were purchased on behalf of Steven Green; five years later a thirteenth fragment was added to that collection. Unfortunately, the pre-purchase provenance of the fragments has not been disclosed. The fragments were donated to the Museum of the Bible and are presently kept in Oklahoma City. The present volume is exemplary for the speed of the production, as well as for the pedagogical process leading to the editions of the fragments. Under the supervision of Emanuel Tov and Kipp Davis, eleven professors from different universities served as principal investigators of the fragments, which they studied with a host of students, from undergrad to PhD students, and the odd postdoc, all of which are mentioned as co-authors of the respective chapters. The editions of all individual fragments follow the same model, consisting of a physical description, palaeography and date (provided by Ada Yardeni), transcription, translation, notes on readings, presentation and discussion of textual variants and reconstructed variants, description of orthography and morphology, comments on the textual character, and the relation to other Judaean Desert fragments, photographs, and imaged reconstructions created by Marilyn Lundberg. The descriptions are comprehensive, extensive (though often too extensive for a specialist audience), but to the point.

Eleven of those fragments contain text that could easily be identified as corresponding to biblical passages from the Hebrew Bible, a twelfth contains two consecutive words that are found in the same sequence in 4QInstruction, while the fragmented text of a thirteenth fragment could not be related to any known composition. Some of those fragments contain text which might be of importance for the study of the textual development of specific biblical books (notably that of the Jeremiah fragment, which has features of both the Septuagint and the Masoretic text), but this potential importance is clouded by the uncertainties of provenance and authenticity, which are referenced repeatedly in the book. Emanuel Tov initially states that “some of these fragments must have come from Qumran” (5), but concludes that “for the majority of the texts no firm statement can be made about their provenance” (5). In fact, it remains unclear which of those fragments Kipp Davis states that “their provenance remains a mystery,” but concludes from his study of the palaeographical and physical features of these fragments that many troubling anomalies “raise suspicions about the authenticity of these fragments” (23), a statement that returns in the discussion of some fragments (cf. pp. 132, 134, 155 fn 22, 171; cf. also 224). Many of those palaeographical and physical anomalies are discussed frankly in the editions. One might also mention orthographic anomalies in several of the fragments. The use of a defective spelling of *u/o* alongside lengthened pronominal suffixes, is orthographically anomalous, at least in the light of the evidence of the Qumran scrolls. The same goes for the presence in the Ezekiel fragment of the non-lengthened *w'mrt* for the second masculine singular perfect, alongside the lengthened *-kh* for the second masculine singular suffix. In fact suspicions about authenticity

have been raised by several scholars, including this reviewer, about many of the Dead Sea Scrolls-like fragments that have first surfaced in the 21st century.

Some have stated that such unprovenanced fragments, some or all of which might be inauthentic, should not have been published at all. In my opinion, the present edition, which both describes the fragments, and openly mentions the possibility that these fragments, as well as other fragments in other collections, are inauthentic, should be welcomed. For a discussion about authenticity, we need to have access to the data. Many of those have been provided by this edition.

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